

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Applicant would like to thank the Examiner for the careful examination given to the present application. The application has been reviewed in light of the Office Action, and it is respectfully submitted that the application as amended is in condition for allowance.

The Applicant requests reconsideration of the finality of the Office Action dated 10/01/2003. The Examiner rejected claims 1, 9, 14, 15, 17, 25, 30, and 31 under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Dowling et al. (US Patent No. 6,548,967). However, the rejection under 102(e) has not been indicated to the Applicant by any previous Office Action and is a new ground of rejection. Therefore, the Office Action of 10/01/2003 should not have been made final.

Furthermore, the Office Action of 10/01/2003 states that Dowling claims priority based on several parent U.S. applications filed between August 1997 and October 1999. However, the Office Action does not indicate which parent application of Dowling, which was a continuation-in-part application, discloses the present invention.

Claims 16, 19-24, and 27-29 have been amended. Claims 1-15, 17-18, 25-26, and 30-31 have been canceled.

Claims 16, 19, 22, and 27 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim. Claims 16, 19, 22, and 27 have been rewritten in independent form including all the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Therefore, claims 16, 19, 22, and 27 are in condition for allowance.

Claims 20-21, 23-24, and 28-29 have been amended to depend from the revised claims 16, 19, 22, and 27. Therefore, claims 20-21, 23-24, and 28-29 are in condition for allowance.

Appl. No.: 09/893,185
Amtd. Dated: December 1, 2003
Reply to Office Action of: October 1, 2003

**RESPONSE UNDER 37 CFR 1.116
EXPEDITED PROCEDURE
EXAMINING GROUP 2635**

In light of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that the present application is in a condition for allowance and notice to that effect is hereby requested. If it is determined that the application is not in a condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to initiate a telephone interview with the undersigned attorney to expedite prosecution of the present application.

If there are any additional fees resulting from this communication, please charge the same to our Deposit Account No. 16-0820, our Order No. 33733.

Respectfully submitted,

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